

**National Grants Committee**

**March 26, 2024**

**8:00 AM– 10:00 AM**

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**Judy Camuso – Chair**

**Paul Johansen – Vice Chair**

**Committee Members:** Paul Johansen, WV (Vice Chair of Executive Committee), Ted Will, GA (Vice Chair of Fish and Wildlife Trust Funds Committee), Alan Jenne, NV (WAFWA ), Mark Tisa, MA (NEAFWA), Kevin Robling, SD (MAFWA), Robert Boyles, SC (SEAFWA)

Meeting convened at 8:00 AM by Judy Camuso. . 38 participants attended, including 3 (out of 7) current Committee members:

* Judy Camuso, Chair
* Paul Johansen, Vice Chair
* Alan Jeene
* Mark Tisa
* Kevin Robling
* Robert Boyles

**Scheduled Discussion Items**

* Call to Order, Introductions, Announcements, and Agenda Review – ***Judy Camuso***

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM. The Chair welcomed the attendees.

* Approval of the March 2023 (NA Conference) Meeting Minutes

The Committee members approved the September 2023 Meeting minutes.

* Presentation /Approval of Updated 2025 Multistate Conservation Grants Strategic Priorities – ***Judy Camuso / Silvana Yaroschuk, AFWA***

The 2025 Multistate Conservation Grant Program Strategic Priorities were presented along with the updates. For review, the 2024 MSCGP Priorities were sent to the AFWA Committees, Regional Associations (SEAFWA, NEAFWA, MAFWA, WAFWA) Committees, and Office of Conservation Investments.

A document summarizing the feedback and 2024 Priorities with red-lined edits was forwarded to the National Grants Committee. The National Grants Committee discussed this during a call on March 13, 2024, and decided to move forward with the voting during this meeting.

**The 2025 MSCGP Priorities were unanimously approved during the meeting.**

* President’s Task Force Update – ***Justin Grider, AL***

Justin Grider, MSCGP PTF Vice Chair, gave an update on President’s Task Force.

The PTF objective is to:

* Reduce perceived conflict of interest.
* Increase transparency.
* Simplify the process for submitting the best proposals.

The Task Force met twice to identify issues and discuss recommendations. To solicit feedback, a survey of PTF members was deployed. Recommendations for immediate (2024) implementation were developed, including:

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| **Immediate Recommendations – Implement in 2024** | |
| **Topic** | **Recommendations** |
| Conflict Of Interest | -Limit review team membership to staff from state and federal members  -Have NGC Chair field complaints |
| Scoring Criteria / Application Process | -Remove 20% voluntary cap on indirect |
| Training | -Implement eligibility training  -Expand training of reviewers: ethics; treatment of indirect |
| Strategic Priorities | -Partners (NGOs & Industry) continue to play strong role in developing priorities |
| National Survey | -Include R3 source funds to support R3-specific objectives as guided by originating legislation |
| Feedback to Applicants | -NGC has opportunity for final questions before submitting final list to DOI |
| Scoring | -Implement minimum score for successful applicants instead of focus on spending available funds |
| Multi Year Proposals | -Consider making time frame consistent with treatment of national survey (five years max instead of three) |

These short-term recommendations were presented to the Executive Committee for endorsement.

Task Force teams will continue to work on additional issues between North America and the Annual Meeting.

* 2025 Multistate Conservation Grant Program Housekeeping

– ***Silvana Yaroschuk/John Lord, AFWA***

* 2025 Process/Timeline
* MSCGP Projects species/activities Eligibility

The 2025 process/timeline was presented. Also, an explanation of eligibility was added to the presentation.

* Office of Conservation Investments Update – ***Paul Rauch, OCI***

Paul Rauch from the Office of Conservation Investments (OCI) reported the following to the committee:

* + All 55 MSCGP grants (and previously obligated grants) for the 2024 Cycle were awarded.
  + The USFWS and AFWA are working on planning training webinars for MSCGP applicants
* 2027 National Survey Update – ***Brian Clark, KY***

The National Grants Committee received updates on the 2027 National Survey. Brian gave a summary of National Survey Working Group responsibilities, which include:

* Preparing the RFP for the National Survey based on AFWA member requirements
* Reviewing proposals and recommending a final vendor to AFWA leadership for inclusion in the MSCGP for funding
* Monitoring implementation of the survey and ensuring vendor performance

\*Funding for workgroup coordination available through MSCGP

\*\*Funding for USFWS Coordination is also available through MSCGP

Also, the NGC heard about the 2027 NS goals:

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| **2027 Survey Goals** |
| **Maintain Innovations from 2022** |
| Re-Build the Trend  Determine the Feasibility of a more frequent high-level participation survey in addition to the full five-year survey. |
| Expand state participation |
| Capture archery hunting data dropped in 2022 Survey. |
| Determine if a Funding Cap of $7.5million over the survey cycle is sufficient. |
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| **2027 Survey Timeline – Next Steps** |
| April – May 2024: Develop RFP for 2027 Survey  June 2024: Solicit Proposals  Early August (?) 2024: Coordination Meeting – Denver, CO to review proposals and interview potential vendors.  August 2024: Finalize proposal selection.  September 2024: Make Final Recommendation on the next survey at the September 2024 Annual Meeting |
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Presentation on 2023 MSCGP ongoing/completed Grants:

Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Infrastructure for North America

***– Krysten Schuler Cornell University***

Coordination of State Fish and Wildlife Agencies’ Authority to Manage Wildlife Resources in Concert with Federal Actions Required by International Treaties, Conventions, Partnerships, and Initiatives (CITES) ***– Deb Hahn, AFWA***

NGC heard from two ongoing Multistate Conservation Grant Program grantees.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 AM